

COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS

Minutes of November 24, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robin Bahr Casey, Chair; Margaret Coffin; Tom Cullinane; Theresa Eckstrom; Mathew Fonseca; Christopher Evans; Ursula Hanus; Paul Johnson; Elizabeth Nguyen; Gail Schuyler; Gail Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: Victor Ortiz; Excused – Steve Smajkiewicz and Elaine Wrubel

STAFF PRESENT: Amy Vogel Waters; Patty Hainsworth; Linda Wincek Moore

GUESTS PRESENT: Laura Pearson, African American Elder Group; Rosemarie Highlands & Vo Robert, St. Paul's Elder Outreach; Erica, Centro Las Americas; Lisa Brennan, Ascentria New Americans Program;

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Elizabeth Nguyen was introduced as a new (returning) Commission member and introductions were made. The Commission minutes of October 27, 2014 were approved as mailed. The Senior Center Report was approved as mailed. m/s/a unanimous

Laura Pearson reported on the African American Group and their activities at the senior center, including bringing in educational and health related speakers, participating in art classes, supporting the completion of the anti-violence/anti-racism mural, and assisting the public schools. There are 25 members although participation is not constant.

Rosemarie Highlands from St. Paul's Elder Outreach introduced Vo Robert who was recently hired to the program. She explained that St. Paul's Elder Outreach assists those people who can't come to the senior center for their needs and spoke about some current cases. The program is also involved in the Public Health's Prevention Wellness Trust Fund and the Senior Support Team. They outreach to approximately 100 seniors/month with 4 part-time workers.

Amy clarified that Centro Las Americas and the Ascentria New Americans Program are scheduled to report at future Commission meetings.

Amy gave an update on the goals and objectives for November including: The contracts for the DPH Prevention Wellness Trust Fund are still being worked on by the City's Law Dept; A 19-hour/week staff person will be hired using the DPH Prevention Wellness Trust Fund to do data base management; An amount of \$350,000 in CDBG funds is available to be spent on the senior center roof, window replacement, interior painting, carpet replacement, upgrade the security system, and more; Friends has pledged money and a capital request has been made to the city to replace the upholstered chairs in the lobby; State funding cuts have not affected the Senior Center this year, but it will be affecting Home Cares; The ambitious goal of 412 different programs was set for FY 15 and we are at 55% of that goal to date; The intergenerational Veterans Day program was very moving and inspirational; A group from Clark U. has developed a marketing plan for the senior center which includes Facebook and Twitter;

Patty reported on programs, the facilities and grounds work, including: The Worcester State Nursing students are re-doing the Over 50 exercise video; Mass College of Pharmacy students have completed their internship at the senior center; The annual Craft Fair will be held on Tues., Nov. 25th along with the

Thanksgiving celebration; Open Enrollment programs; the Polar Express returns; and repairs are being made to heating and lighting.

Linda reported: that the SHINE volunteers are booked solid during this open enrollment period; The Worcester State Nursing students gave presentations to English and non-English speaking groups on the new pneumonia virus; The Healthy Living Support Group is being facilitated by UMass Nursing graduate students; The Clerkship with 2nd year UMass students is finished and was successful; The Matter of Balance Program will be taught in Vietnamese in the future and is currently taught in English and Spanish and the East Side Community Home Improvement Program will be building an outdoor ramp on a clients' house and repairing a porch room for another client.

Members agreed to cancel the December 22nd meeting unless there is a need. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, January 26, 2015.

The meeting adjourned.